

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 6, 7, and 12-19 are now pending in the application, with Claims 1, 18 and 19 being independent. Claims 16-19 are newly-presented herein.

Claims 1, 6, 7, and 12-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,410,900 (Terasawa) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,896,143 (Matsui et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Terasawa is directed an ink recording apparatus in which a nozzle 3 of a recording head 1 is covered by a cap portion. A suction pipe 35 is connected to passage 6A within the cap portion for suction using pump 20. In Terasawa, a single suction pipe is connected to a single passage 6A of the capping portion.

As recognized in the Office Action, Terasawa does not disclose or suggest joint members equal in number to a number of discharge nozzles, as is recited in independent Claim 1, as well as a new independent Claims 18 and 19. Accordingly, Terasawa cannot disclose or suggest a connecting member selectively connectable to each of the joint members, as is further recited in the independent claims. That is, in Terasawa suction pipe 35 is only connectable to the single passage 6A.

Accordingly, Terasawa fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in the independent claims.

Matsui et al. describes, with respect to Figure 6, four recording heads 1A-1D and an equal number of suction caps 41 and suction pumps 16. Each suction cap 41 is directly connected to a corresponding pump 16. Accordingly, Matsui et al. also fails to disclose or suggest a connecting member that is selectively connectable to each of the joint members, as is recited in the independent claims. Rather, the tubing between each suction cap 41 and pump 16 is only connectable to one cap, not selectively connectable to more than one joint member or cap. Therefore, Matsui et al. fails to remedy the deficiencies of Terasawa noted above with respect to the independent claims.

Thus, Claims 1, 18 and 19 are patentable over the citation of record.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejection are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1, 18 and 19. Dependent Claims 6, 7, and 12-17 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in independent Claim 1. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance.

Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Mark A. Williamson/

Mark A. Williamson
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 33,628

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200
MAW:yr

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